

# ***The Iowa Council on Homelessness***

## **Draft Minutes Executive Committee Meeting**

Date/Time: Wednesday, February 19, 2016 at 10:00  
Meeting Location: The Iowa Finance Authority; McNarney Conference Room  
Address: 2015 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50312

A regular meeting of the Executive Committee for the Iowa Council on Homelessness was held on Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

### **OPENING**

Chair Phillips opened the February 19, 2016 meeting of the Executive Committee at 10:00 A.M. The following voting members were present: Phillips, Wilson, Timm, and on the phone was Brustkern, Axeen. A quorum was established.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ACTION ITEM**

Mr. Wilson made a motion to move an item from new business up into the agenda. The agenda was approved with the addition.

Justin Eilers from CommonBond Communities has come before the Executive Committee with a form that applies to a tax credit project with Homeless set aside that requires the COC Chair or Director to sign. In that form is language implying that the COC understand the project and there is a need for it before approving it.

CommonBond Communities is a nonprofit affordable housing developer based out of St. Paul, MN. They have been in business for about 45 years with a long history of working in affordable housing for families, seniors, tax credit, 202, Section 8 to name a few examples. They have 105 rental properties with the vast majority of them in Minnesota, but in Iowa they have about 250 rental units in Des Moines, Waterloo, Marshalltown and Cedar Rapids. CommonBonds mission to build sustainable homes and vibrant communities, they look to expand or develop projects that serve a real need in a community and also be a nonprofit. They look for ways to build buildings and enhance the resident's lives and enhance the neighborhood.

Iowa Finance Authority came out in December of 2015 with a special tax credit set aside round call Housing for Homeless Demonstration which had to be an adaptive reuse or new construction project in which 10% of the units are set aside for formerly homeless households. IFA wants to see a strong service provider component that would provide services. This is a competitive financing round and the full application is due at the end of March and the awards are made in June. CommonBond is proposing a 45 unit building with 5 units set aside for formerly homeless, two 1 bedroom apartments, two 2 bedroom units and one 3 bedroom unit. Those in the units would be paying minimal rent to live there. They will be partnering with Willis Dady

to help to help coordinate referrals and intakes. There will be a case manager provided to those units for stability services.

Phoebe Trepp with Willis Dady has been looking at trends in Linn County and is seeing steady, consistent and somewhat increasing numbers of people in the shelter systems, men, women and children. Willis Dady and all emergency shelters are participating in Coordinated Entry. There is currently 8 beds available in Linn County for Permanent Supportive Housing and they are restricted to chronically homeless singles. It is in one particular unit with 8 beds and there is quite a wait list. The need is great. Willis Dady serves a mix of families and singles for over 300 homeless individuals in a year. Willis Dady is looking to make lots of referrals to this if the project is awarded for both single and families to occupy those units.

The case manager structure would consist of a single case manager serving part time to support all 5 households and they would be using a housing first approach and low barrier entry. Keeping them housed would be top priority while working on other goals they identify.

The form also has questions about targeting types of populations and types of sub populations in line with IFA's terms. CommonBond does not have a specified sub group they are targeting.

Chair Phillips opened the floor up for any questions from the committee.

Mr. Wilson asked if there are other projects out there. This is a competitive process and this is the only one brought to our attention.

Ms. Lewis stated it was important for the Balance of State COC to meet today because of the time frame. There could be other projects out there in the other Iowa COC's that we would not know of.

Mr. Timm asked about coordinated intake and if there is any consideration for placement of who goes into the units and how they are selected and in which order.

Ms. Trepp explained they have talked a little about this and CommonBond has done several projects just like this and have been helpful. Willis Dady does Coordinated intake in Linn County, but there is no process currently for permanent supportive referrals. In discussions with CommonBond, Willis Dady has talked about using VI-SPDAT and other prioritization tools to be able to assess who should be able to go into the units. We haven't finalized that in contract form, but I am hopeful we will be able to use established best practices for selecting the referrals for those units.

Ms. Trepp also explained that Willis Dady currently uses VI-SPDAT, but mostly for Rapid Rehousing. Willis Dady works heavily with the veteran population, but we decided to leave the sub population open and not meant just for veterans.

Mr. Timm asked a question about who would not be able to enter into this program. What would disqualify someone from being accepted into this housing project.

Mr. Eilers explained that it would most likely be persons with major felonies and sex offenders as there is an elementary school within a half mile. They expect the population to have some background barriers.

Mr. Timm suggested that going forward, we should have this type of information ahead of time because if we are going to endorse a project and in the next 6 weeks it gets narrowed down to the point of not fitting the need of serving those with high barriers than maybe it's not a project we should endorse as a continuum. If a project is going before IFA for money, we should have the information because there could be 3 or more projects out there that would make a difference if we say yes or no. I want to make sure that if we are going to go down this road and create housing we are not targeting people with high barriers so they will have an opportunity to get into housing.

Mr. Eilers stated their partnership with Willis Dady is based on the need they are seeing. There is no way that it is in anyone's best interest to create this housing and not have the type of availability and flexibility with our screening to keep those units filled and meeting a need in the community. We would not create a plan that would restrict so many people that we can't keep people in the building. We are really committed to this project to house people that need this type of housing. We wouldn't create a building like this that wouldn't serve the homeless in the area.

Ms. Trepp explained that at Willis Dady, their intent is to help our folks get into housing and stay in housing. We use the VI-SPDAT and with that, if people go beyond the score for Rapid Rehousing, the next level is Permanent Supporting Housing or people with multiple barriers. There are so many that need housing, that we would use this opportunity for people with the most barriers. To us this is a great opportunity to have this housing.

Chair Phillips proposed that Justin come back to the next Executive Committee meeting and give the members and update on what limitations or requirements were made for that housing.

On a motion my Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Timm, signing the form for CommonBond was approved. Chair Phillips will sign the form, scan and e-mail it today.

## **SELECTED COMMITTEE ITEMS**

**Coordinated Entry Committee – (Co-Chair - Ms. Dunnwald)** Ms. Dunnwald stated that through several Coordinated Entry meetings, they talked about developing a letter to move forward with regional Coordinated Entry procedures. The Sub Committee tried to iron out what we would want a lead agency to have or need to meet to move forward. This is to get an idea of who those regional partners might be and what areas of the state they would potentially cover across the 96 remaining counties. She presented a draft of a letter that is intended to be sent out to COC's, ESG, SAF & SSVF funded programs across the Balance of State. With it is a survey on survey monkey asking what areas they would like to cover knowing that may change, based on available funding and where they are with Housing First, VI-SPDAT and what partners they have or intend to have to help them get this up and going. There are about 10 questions on it to basically give us ideas of where they are in this process.

Ms. Dunnwald stated we are bringing this letter and survey forward to see if this is something we can get out and we are asking that these come back to us by March 10<sup>th</sup> so we can have information by our next coordinated entry meeting on who those partners are and how we intend to move forward at that time. There are a couple of agencies that have responded. Ms. Dunnwald is looking to IFA to help distribute the letter. Ms. Lewis stated a link to the survey is already on the web site.

Mr. Wilson stated the survey is for the target audience and will be helpful to have them think through what the issues are and what they have already done that would related. He feels Home Forward Iowa would be helpful in a couple of areas.

1. Once potential lead agencies come forward and if there are any gaps then to help figure out how those areas could be best served.
2. Outreach to reach out to those lead agencies once they are identified that have not had any response or not traditionally had services.

Ms. Phillips asked for a motion to go ahead with the letter. Tony Timm made the motion and seconded by Tim Wilson

### **Research and Analysis Committee - (Karin Hamilton)**

The last meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> was by conference call and there were updates from the Institute about PIT. They had 29 counties involved, That is an increase from 8 counties in 2015. They are looking at ability to record and track it in the HUD system in service point. That implementation is being worked out by HUD and vendors. Also talking with ICA about moving toward “closed with exception” and that is targeted to go online July 1<sup>st</sup>. We talked about program performance and it is a work in progress.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2016

### **Public Awareness Committee – Tim Wilson)**

The “Day on the Hill” is scheduled for March 29<sup>th</sup> and my understanding was that we were going to prepare talking points based on the letter. The Iowa Council on Homelessness meeting will be same day starting at 10:00 at IFA.

### **Policy and Planning Committee – Carrie Dunnwald)**

An e-mail went out with standards and appendix. There was a conference call to finalize Logo. Everything is on line now.

### **Nominating Committee (Chair, Ben Brustkern)**

Mr. Brustkern stated that he is trying to get a meeting scheduled for early March. There are a couple of applications to review and we continue to have two empty consumer seats and we also have a resignation. We also have a change in council leadership coming up July 1<sup>st</sup>, and the committee will need to start working on the slate of officers. It is usual procedure for the vice

Chair to move into chair, but since I am with a funded program, maybe the committee should look for nominations to fill both chair and vice chair, I am putting that out for discussion.

Mr. Wilson stated it is hard to find someone who doesn't have potential conflict of interest in some way and I appreciate it that you are in this position and your role with a funded agency. I would like to think you would recuse yourself. You are the most qualified to do this and I don't want this to get in the way.

Ms. Phillips stated we have always struggled to get enough votes on the Council.

Mr. Timm asked if the Chair had to vote. Ms. Phillips stated it's for making quorum, but when voting around funding or policies, we're always going through challenges with funded relationships and quorum. The Vice chair should be a representative from a state agency.

### **Coordinated Care Committee - (Carrie Dunnwald)**

Meeting scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup> – time to be clarified.

Looking at site visits for COC projects for council members and inviting state elected officials and trying to decide on when. It's a work in process.

The Review of the appeals process has been drafted. The Polk County appeals process was a good starting point, but their needs are different from ours. There were questions about the process and some around conflict of interest. What we have now does not go into great detail, but it does go into the process of how appeals can be made and how they are to be reviewed. It gives us flexibility for different situations. Both would be brought before the council. A policy review should be ready for meeting at the end of the month.

### **HMIS – (Julie Eberbach)**

For HUD COC, there are 7 performance measures and 6 that apply to Iowa. Currently our software vendors have four ready and two in beta, we are starting to run them.

It's our understanding that for the 2016 competition, they will be using performance measures.

One of the measures is only for COC projects and it is a community wide measure. Most of them are all participants regardless of whether they are funded with federal dollars. One measure around income and employment is only measured on COC funded organizations and that means there are things we need to build into those agencies profiles for HMIS to see if their reports run properly. We have to work backward through the grant application to see what they got funded for. After we see what the 2016 COC awards will be, it will be a little easier for us.

Regarding the Close with Exceptions work group, we finally got responses back on our second try to get a meeting time. The first meeting is a "Go To Meeting" call on 3/7 at 2:00 and prior to that meeting time, we will supply the work team with the following:

1. What does close with exception mean, what are the requirements and how would that change the workflow in Iowa.
2. What new things would that entail?
3. What kinds of training would go along with that?

We intend for the work group to meet one more time before the next council meeting, then we would have a preliminary design idea for how we would go forward. Our intent would be that the system go live by July 1<sup>st</sup>. On our end, there was a technological change that needed to happen in the system and that has been done. The work request went to the vendor, so the background work has been done.

For the Day on the Hill, we were asked by committee to do one page sheet for handouts.

To Karen's comment about evaluation of COC projects and ESG projects that came up in R & A Committee meeting, we shared with them the two reports that are currently being asked of ESG and SAF funded programs and discussed a little bit about how they would be used in evaluation and then we had some discussion about how to move forward with COC funded projects. There is creative tension now whether to use an APR or System Performance Measures and which would be more heavily looked at by HUD as far as how we would move forward and how they evaluate projects. When we run them now, they are long tables of data. We are trying to use it to produce a report someone could read and understand.

RE: PIT and HIC

The deadline was Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> and we still have about 75% not getting their reports back to us. This has been a year of confusion over the process. We thought we made it much clearer. We did a street count training cooperative with HACAP early. We had great attendance and somehow people thought that was all there was. We had subsequent trainings on how to run your reports in HMIS to turn in the data and folks didn't attend. It is puzzling, because this is not new. We are trying to figure out how to present it in a more effective way next year. It is moving forward and data is falling into place. We had a lot more participation in street count.

In April or May, we will start to recruit for the next point in time count. The reason is that 2017 is the official PIT and you have to have everything up to date. So we are going to try working on it earlier. HUD has not given any indication when the portal will be open. Last year the preliminary deadline was in March and final in April. One example that you are judged on is how many people left programs to permanent destinations and how many returned. In AHAR, Iowa didn't have usable tables for shelters for individuals because our bed coverage is so low. For PIT, this time, I think we will have a usable shell, because some agencies came on and are collecting data but it wasn't for a full year and we couldn't include them for AHAR.

### **IFA STAFF UPDATE**

The Legislative appropriation this year is \$40,000.00 and \$10,000 for training for council members. It is open for discussion. Maybe use \$5,000.00 for IFA to reimburse council members travel expense. It is up to the committee and it goes away by June. They are discussing next year.

Can the council hold 5 – 6 meetings around the state that would cover these key things such as PIT Performance measures? We have to have it done by June 30 and we are now in February.

Ms. Lewis suggested a training. IFA is looking at doing a training on “Crucial Conversations”. It is a title of a book. It’s a great book and I notice in this committee and council is that this is difficult and can get negative. The cost is \$500.00 per person for a 2 day training session. Also, there are conferences in May and June. The Iowa Department of Administrative Services does a lot of trainings. We can also pay a trainer, but need ideas quick

There could be performance measure trainings. We have started planning on regional trainings and it is an issue of the cost of travel for agencies.

Chair Phillips asked Ms. Dunnwald if she would be comfortable if \$2,500.00 was set aside for COC and create a date that we have to have it planned out or give the money back. Maybe open it up to any other committee that has an idea and bring it to the April meeting. Send out a request, to all the committee chairs and co-chairs that is brief and to the point one week before the next Executive committee meeting. Chair Phillips asked Ms Lewis to clarify just how much we are talking about.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Karen Hyatt would like to provide a SOAR update at the March ICH meeting.

Iowa Department of Education has requested to present Reauthorization of Child Care Development fund changes and how they handle income and eligibility at March ICH meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Iowa Council on Homelessness Executive Committee will be on Friday, April 15, 2016.

### **ADJOURN**

On motion by Mr. Timm and seconded by Mr. Wilson, the February 19, 2016 Executive Committee meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

### **VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT**

1. Donna Phillips (Chair) Iowa Attorney General’s Office
2. Tim Wilson (Secretary) Home Forward Iowa Finance Authority
3. Tony Timm Amerihealth Caritas
4. Ben Brustkern Cedar Valley Friends of the Family
5. Allan Axeen

## **OTHERS PRESENT**

1. Carrie Dunnwald, Cedar Valley Friends of the Family
2. Julie Eberbach, Institute for Community Alliances
3. Karin Hamilton, Iowa Department of Public Safety
4. Phoebe Trepp, Willis Dady
5. Justin Eilers, Commonbond Communities
6. Amber Lewis, Iowa Finance Authority
7. Judy Hartman, Iowa Finance Authority